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## INSPECTION & WEIGHING

# UPDATE

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Federal Grain Inspection Service  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250

October 12, 1979

### INSPECTION FEES ON HOURLY BASIS:

Starting Dec. 2, federal fees for original on-line grain inspection services will be charged on an hourly basis rather than the present unit rate. Travel costs will be included in the hourly fee.

On-line inspection service includes all services which are based on official samples obtained from a running stream of grain during loading or unloading.

The new rule also rescinds the 2-hour grace period, in effect since July, before inspectors begin charging a standby fee for on-line inspection.

The hourly fee for noncontract inspection services will be \$12.80 per employee hour on regular workdays, and \$16 per employee hour for nonregular workdays.

However, elevators can obtain reduced fees of \$11.20 per hour for regular workdays and \$14.40 per hour on nonregular workdays if they contract in advance with FGIS for inspection services.

Current hourly fees for some inspection services which are not on-line will be reduced by 20 percent for noncontract regular workdays, and by 5 percent on holidays.

Leland E. Bartelt, administrator of FGIS, said the change may result in decreased costs for some high-volume elevators and increased costs for some others.

However, the new hourly rate will result in fees that, as nearly as practicable, cover the costs of providing the service," Bartelt said.

The U.S. Grain Standards Act requires that fees for official inspection or weighing of grain be reasonable and cover the costs of providing the services, except for administrative and supervisory costs.

### TRUCK DRIVER FINED, ON PROBATION:

A private truck driver has been fined \$200 and placed on three years' supervised probation for assaulting a FGIS weighing employee.

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas at Beaumont accepted a guilty plea from the driver, Bart W. Schnexnaider. The court reduced its original two-year prison sentence to supervised probation.

Schnexnaider was charged with threatening a FGIS weigher with a shotgun at the Continental Elevator at Beaumont on Oct. 25, 1978.

### PROTEIN TESTING RULE DELAYED:

A proposed rule that would provide protein testing on a request basis for all classes of wheat except for mixed and unclassified wheats has been delayed.

The rule was originally planned to take effect in August, but a decision is now expected by May 1, 1980.

(Con't pg. 2)



(Con't from pg. 1)

Leland E. Bartelt, administrator of FGIS, said the delay will provide the agency time to fully consider all the public comments that were received on the proposal.

FGIS has been providing protein testing service for hard red winter and hard red spring wheats at export elevators since May 1978.

"We expect requests for official protein testing services to increase when testing is extended to soft red winter, durum and white wheats, and is available at all specified service points," Bartelt said.

#### FORMER FGIS EMPLOYEE SENTENCED:

Charlie Lee Havard, a former FGIS employee, was sentenced to one year of supervised probation and ordered to make restitution after pleading guilty to seven counts of theft from the government.

Havard was also ordered to perform some type of public service for one day per week for 52 weeks.

Havard had been indicted by a federal grand jury for filing 43 false claims for overtime, valued at \$5,798.87.

#### WEIGHT WAIVERS GRANTED IN STRIKE:

FGIS granted waivers of inbound weighing requirements to eight facilities during the grain millers' strike in the Duluth, Minn./Superior, Wisc. area.

Waivers were given for 5,812 railcars and 42 trucks while the strike was in progress.

Waivers of outbound weighing requirements were also granted for approximately 635 railcars of grain going into the domestic market.

#### BERGLAND COMPLIMENTS GRAIN INDUSTRY:

Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland has complimented export elevator managers for helping to set a new one-week record in the amount of grain exported. However, he cautioned the elevators to continue to stress job safety.

"I hope that in your effort to move vast amounts of grain through the elevators, you are giving special attention to the increased danger which comes when high-volume operations can tempt one to neglect careful housekeeping practices," Bergland said in a letter to all export elevator managers in the United States.

The Secretary noted that for the week ending July 12, the United States exported 106 million bushels of grain -- more than in any previous week in American grain export history.

"You are to be congratulated for your role in this remarkable achievement and for the expanding contribution you are making to a more favorable U.S. balance of payments," the Secretary wrote. He said the American grain trade is also to be commended for the increased attention it has given to elevator safety.

"However, because of increased elevator activity, I urge that you be especially sensitive to all elevator safety problems, particularly housekeeping and dust control," the Secretary said.

"I am sure you share with me a determination to do everything possible to avoid a repeat of the 1977 elevator explosions."

(Con't pg. 3)



(Con't from pg. 2)

There were six grain elevator explosions in December 1977. Fifty-nine persons died as a result of the explosions, including 13 employees of USDA's FGIS.

In a letter to leaders of seven major U.S. farm organizations, Bergland said the American farmer was a key factor in the record-breaking grain export week, and therefore "clearly must share in the congratulations."

#### SCALE RATIO BEAM UNDER TEST:

The Scale Testing and Weighing Branch is testing a ratio beam, which will be used to test weights in elevators.

The beam has been loaded to 3,000 pounds and appears to meet manufacturers' specifications for accuracy and repeatability. If the testing and verification of the beam proceed as expected, it should be ready for field tests in the near future.

A specification draft for elevator operators requesting the service has been prepared. At present, elevators must ship their weights to FGIS-approved laboratories in order for their accuracy to be verified.

#### AUGUST-SEPTEMBER HAZARD REPORT:

A total of 22 hazard alerts in elevators was logged during August and September, 11 during each month.

The shortest FGIS employee evacuation reported because of hazardous conditions during August was 35 minutes. The longest was 11.5 hours, due to a switch engine on fire at Producers Elevator, Portland, Tex.

In September, the shortest evacuation time was 15 minutes. The longest was 14 hours, 45 minutes, due to a bomb threat at Public Elevator, Corpus Christi, Tex.

The most serious incident reported during the 2-month period was a fire and explosion at Minneapolis which burned out the wooden Hiawatha Elevator. No FGIS employees were present at time of the incident.

#### GRAIN INSPECTION APPLICANTS SOUGHT:

Applications are being sought for designation of an official grain inspection agency in the Burlington, Iowa area.

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce Grain Funds, Inc., which now provides official inspection service in southeastern Iowa and a portion of western Illinois, has asked that its designation be cancelled. The firm has agreed to continue providing official services until a new agency has been named.

Comments or applications for the agency position are due by Nov. 5. These should be sent to: Compliance Division, Federal Grain Inspection Service, Room 2405 - Auditors Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Maps of the proposed area may be obtained from the same address.



